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20. ON THE RECORD OF THE BLACK RUBY BARB, *PUNTIUS NIGROFASCIATUS* (GUNTHER) (PISCES: CYPRINIDAE) FROM INDIA

(With a text-figure)

Yazdani (1977) reported the occurrence of *Puntius nigrofasciatus* (Gunther) based on six specimens of fish collected from a small rivulet in the forest area of Ponda (Goa), and claimed it as a new record of this fish from India. This fish had earlier been recorded only from Sri Lanka.

In the course of extensive collections throughout the Deccan region, we had not come across any specimens of *P. nigrofasciatus*. It was, therefore, a matter of surprise to us to read about this new record. From Sanguem, Goa (25 kilometres from Ponda as the crow flies) the second author (S.R.S.) has been collecting hundreds of specimens of another barb, *Puntius narayani* Hora. This fish resembles the Black Ruby barb in general coloration, having three vertical black bands on its body, but lacking the characteristic black coloration on the dorsal, anal and pelvic fins (which is prominent in *P. nigrofasciatus*). We, therefore, surmised that the specimens identified by Yazdani as *P. nigrofasciatus* might actually be *P. narayani*.

P. narayani was first described by Hora in 1937 from the Cauvery river in Coorg, and it closely resembles *P. nigrofasciatus* not only in its colour pattern, as stated earlier, but

also in having a complete lateral line and in the absence of barbels. The fin-ray and other counts for the two species are as follows:—*P. nigrofasciatus* (as given by Day): D. 3/8; A. 2/5; P. 15; V. 9; C. 19; L. 1. 20-21.

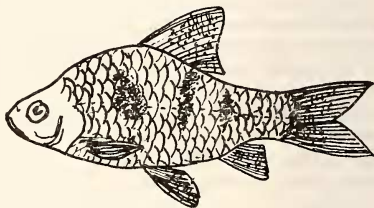


Fig. 1. *Puntius narayani* Hora (after Hora, 1937).

P. nigrofasciatus (as given by Munro): D. 3/8; A. 3/5; P. 1/12; L.1. 20-22; L. tr. 8 ($4\frac{1}{2} + 3\frac{1}{2}$).

P. narayani (as given by Hora): D. 3/9; A. 3/6; P. 14; V. 9; C. 18; L.1. 22; L.tr. 9 ($4\frac{1}{2} + 4\frac{1}{2}$).

In the absence of an opportunity to examine the actual specimens determined by Yazdani, our surmise that these specimens might not be *P. nigrofasciatus* could not be definitely ascertained. In August, 1979 we

could examine two of his specimens in detail, while on loan from the Zoological Survey of India to the Curator, Taraporevala Aquarium. The label accompanying these two specimens read:

***Puntius nigrofasciatus* (Gunther)**

Locality: A small rivulet in the forest at Ponda (Goa). **Date:** 13-12-73. **Collector** Dr. B. S. Lamba. **Det.** by G.M.Y.

From these details it appeared quite certain that the fishes mentioned by Yazdani in his note (cited above) as "collected from a small rivulet in the forest at Ponda, Goa" were the same that were loaned by the Zoological Survey of India for examination. Our examination of these specimens confirmed our earlier suspicion that the fishes claimed by Yazdani to be *nigrofasciatus* were really *P. narayani*.

E-31, CUSROW BAUG,
SHAHID BHAGAT SINGH ROAD,
BOMBAY-400 039.

"SACHETAN",
L/4-5, SITARAM BUILDING,
PALTON ROAD, BOMBAY-400 001,
March 26, 1980.

P. nigrofasciatus is a popular fish in the home aquarium hobby, and as such, specimens are readily available (on sale in pet shops) in large cities like Bombay, Pune, Delhi, etc.

Yazdani (op. cit.) has attempted to give an explanation for the occurrence of his so-called *P. nigrofasciatus* in Goa, stating that the fish first evolved in the Western Ghats and subsequently migrated to Sri Lanka. Had this been so, the fish would also be likely to occur in Kerala or southern Tamilnadu. Moreover, Yazdani has not given any palaeontological evidence to corroborate his hypothesis.

We are grateful to Shri J. N. Pande, Curator, Taraporevala Aquarium, Bombay, for allowing us to examine the Ponda specimens while on loan from the Zoological Survey of India.

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Black Ruby, *Puntius nigrofasciatus* (Gunther) from (21): 760.

21. LOCAL NAMES OF POMFRETS FROM THE INDIAN COASTS

Pomfrets are highly esteemed as tablefish and are acclaimed as one of the tastiest fishes of the world. Because of their commercial importance they are eagerly sought after by fishermen. In Indian waters, pomfrets are represented by three species, namely silver pom-

fret (*Pampus argenteus* Euphrasen), Chinese or grey pomfret (*Pampus chinensis* Euphrasen) and black pomfret (*Formio niger* Bloch). Diverse local names are applied to these fishes, along the vast stretch of the Indian coast and a knowledge of such names is of importance